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# Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 447-4330

Letter No. 2450

March 2, 1990

FARM COMMODITY PROGRAMS -- The January-March issue of National Food Review examines farm commodity programs and their effects. For the last half-century U.S. agriculture has been among the most productive in the world. It has made a high-quality, low-cost diet available to a growing population at home and has fed millions abroad. Although U.S. agriculture has been immensely successful, American farmers have not always prospered to the same degree. For a copy of National Food Review, call: Marci Hilt (202) 447-6445.

KEEP ENVIRONMENT IN MIND -- It's almost time for spring cleaning, and Karen Behm, a Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service management specialist, says you should keep the environment in mind when you're doing it. "Americans throw away 160 million tons of garbage a year," she says, "and much of it ends up in landfills." Behm has several ideas to reduce what we consider disposable. "Although individual actions may seem insignificant," she says, "added together they can have an important effect on the present and future quality of our environment." Contact: Karen Behm (504) 388-4141.

EATING RIGHT? Want to know more about dietary guidelines? Want to interview an expert on the subject? USDA's experts on eating right will be on media tours during the next few months. They'll be in Denver, Colo., the week of April 23; Chicago, Ill., the week of May 21. Spokespersons will also be available for media interviews in New York, N.Y.; Houston and San Antonio, Texas; Newport, R.I.; Wausau, Wisc.; and Anaheim, Calif. To schedule an interview, call: Eileen Newman (301) 436-5724.

EXPORTS RAISED -- USDA has forecast U.S. ag exports at \$38.5 billion for fiscal year 1990. This is \$500 million higher than in November. The upward revision largely reflected a 3-million ton increase in expected U.S. coarse grain exports. However, export value is still expected to decline more than \$1 billion from fiscal 1989. Contact: Steve MacDonald (202) 786-1822 or Dave Pendlum (202) 382-9054.

FLAVORING LABELS -- Over the next six months, USDA will require meat & poultry processors to list substances used to flavor meat & poultry products by their common name on the label. "We are making this change to better protect the public health and serve the consumer's right to know," says Lester M. Crawford, administrator of USDA's Food Safety & Inspection Service. Contact: Jim Greene (202) 382-0314.



CATHERINE BERTINI, assistant secretary for food & consumer services, shows off the "Independence Card" used for electronic benefits transfer in Baltimore's local food stamp program. The card works like a credit card, allowing food stamp recipients to draw their benefits electronically and to pay for groceries without using paper food stamps. The Baltimore project, one of several around the country, began Nov. 30. Bertini received the Leadership & Human Services Award from the American Public Welfare Association March 1. Contact: Susan Acker (703) 756-3286. (USDA Photo by Pamela Faith.)

OUTER LIMITS -- Not only is Mt. Everest the outer limits of the world, it's also the outer limits for the body. Last spring, USDA scientist Robert Reynolds directed the first major nutrition study at extreme altitudes on Mt. Everest. Although it will take another year to analyze all the data, Reynolds says preliminary findings exploded some mountain climbing myths. Climbers on Reynolds' expedition averaged a 10 percent loss of their starting body weight (30 percent had been reported as average). And, high-fat foods didn't cause nausea or precipitate acute vomiting and the climbers didn't lose their taste for high-fat foods. Contact: Robert D. Reynolds (301) 344-2459.

GOT AN ITEM FOR THE FARM BROADCASTERS LETTER? We like to hear from you; and to tell others what you're doing. Are there items you'd like to see more of; others you'd rather not? Tell us. Write or call: Marci Hilt, USDA Radio-TV, Rm. 410-A, Washington, D.C. 20250. (202) 447-6445.



FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1708 -- Perhaps the most important document you'll ever write is your will. Brenda Curtis talks with Montgomery County Maryland Extension Family Life Specialist Ann Elword about the importance of having a will. She also tells about the impact on a family when people die without a will. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 min. documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1190 -- A hundred years of peanut butter; storing poisonous materials; your last will & testament; fake fat; home water conservation. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 - 3 min. consumer features.)

AGRITAPE #1697 -- USDA News Highlights; an environmental farm bill; farm program sign-up; selecting wheat varieties; drought tolerant cotton. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1309 -- Aging skin & immunity; body composition in medicine; preservative in nutrient study; manganese absorption; alcohol consumption study. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Tues., March 20, weekly weather & crop report, world ag outlook catfish report; Thurs., March 22, U.S. trade update, poultry production report; Fri., March 23, livestock update, wool production report, world livestock production report.

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE (202) 488-8358 or 8359.

Material changed at 5 p.m. EST each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

March 1, 1990

FEATURES -- Pat O'Leary reports on the "America the Beautiful" project; Mississippi State University's Scott Huffman reports on soils testing for gardeners; Gary Beaumont, Univ. of Illinois, reports on new regulations for pesticide & fertilizer dealers; & Lisa Telder has the story on Michigan State U. research on Michigan wine production.

ACTUALITIES -- USDA Economist Greg Gajewski on farmland values & 1990 food prices; USDA Economist Jerry Stam on Farmer Mac & farm debt; Lester Crawford, administrator of USDA's Food Safety & Inspection Service, on food labeling; USDA Economist Larry Van Meir on the feed situation; USDA Economist LeLand Southard on the livestock & poultry outlook; USDA Economist Scott Sanford on cotton use & prices; and USDA Economist Ed Allen on wheat stocks.

AG UPDATE -- With news from USDA's Agricultural Stabilization & Conservation Service.

NEXT WEEK -- The Caribbean National Forest.

Available on satellite Westar IV, audio 6.2 or 6.8:

THURSDAY . . . . . 7:30-7:45 p.m., EST, Transponder 12D  
SATURDAY . . . . . 10:30-11:15 a.m., EST, Transponder 10D  
MONDAY . . . . . 8:30-9:15 a.m., EST, Transponder 12D  
(Repeat of Saturday transmission)

NEW...program called "Women of Agriculture" is a weekly feature being produced by Rich Hawkins (KRVN, Lexington, Neb.). He says more voices of farmers on their daily programs are having a positive response. Rich says a record number of farm broadcasters were in Phoenix, Ariz., covering the National Corn Growers Association defeat of a proposed checkoff program. Dewey Nelson (also at KRVN) says producers face the prospect of water rationing this summer unless the Colorado mountains and western Nebraska receive moisture this spring. There has been no snow cover on the flatlands for several weeks.

CROP...insurance is necessary, just as home or car insurance, but the program needs adjusting so it is more appealing, says Robert Brown (WLBK/WDEK, De Kalb, Ill.). Bob says that's what producers are telling him. Bob also says he hears mixed comments about flexibility -- the attitude often depending on the size of a producer's operation.

## ***Farm Broadcasters Letter***

Office of Public Affairs  
Radio-TV Division  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington, D.C. 20250-1300

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CENSUS '90



**April 1, 1990.**  
**Answer the census.**

HONEY...production is down 45 percent, says Cindy Zimmerman (Ind. Florida Agrinet, Ocala). Freezes, drought and mites have lowered output. Producers have replanted freeze-damaged tomato acreage, but unless moisture levels are improved, water rationing is a possibility and could hurt production. Cindy says most of the state has water rationing programs underway.

FARM...tour of Australia and New Zealand leaves the U.S. March 16, says Bob Bosold (WAXX, Eau Claire, Wisc.). Forty producers from the station's area have joined the tour.

NAFB...south central region vice president Curt Lancaster (VSA Network, San Angelo, Texas) says region's meeting will be held May 4-5 at South Padre Island, Texas. Charlie Rankin (KURV, Edinburg, Texas) will serve as meeting host.

VIC POWELL  
Chief, Radio & TV Division